لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

Ikha 1349—October 1970

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EDITORS

S. D. AHMAD M. G. AHMAD

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam

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The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was born in 1835 at Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of world Reformer to combat the current of anti-religious philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his forefathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world; and that he, the Promised Messiah, had come instead.

The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter, by means of His signs, to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers, and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences of their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, goodwill and self-less fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Nooruddin, Khalifatul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Khalifatul Masih II. During his 52-year long leadership, the Khalifatul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named, with one accord, Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the late Khalifatul Masih's son and the Promised Messiah's grandson, Khalifatul Masih III.

For further information about the Movement, its activities and aims and objectives and literature, enquiries may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to

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It is open to all for discussing problems connected with the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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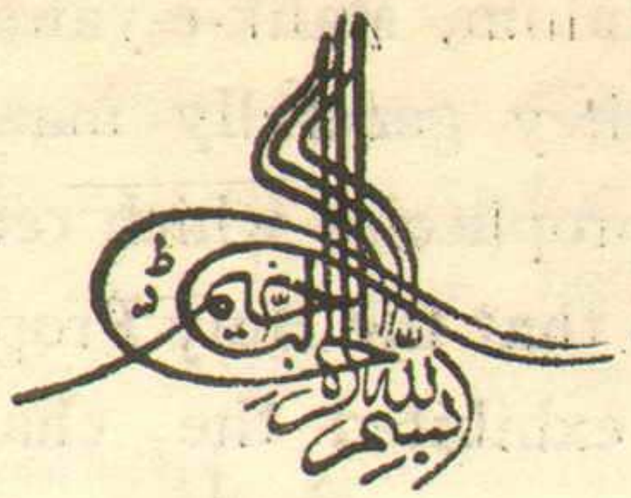

The Review of Religions

RABWAH. WEST PAKISTAN

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Treasures of the Fatiha

(The Promised Messiah)

VII

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What was the secret underlying the introduction of the Fatiha by the Holy Quran with the attributives Al-Hamdu-lillah-e-Rabbil a'lamin, ar-Rahman, ar-Rahim, Malik-e-yaumid din. It took to this style on account of some nations' denial of the existence of God and His attributives—Rabb, (Lord of Providence) Rahman, Rahim, (Compassionate) Malik-e-yaumiddin (Master of the Day of Judgement). Beware, one who did not regard the words and sentences of the Holy Quran which are canonical, did not appreciate the value of the Quran. (Al-Hakm Nov. 19, 1900 page 4)*

*Note: Here He also said Rabbil alamin (the Lord of universe; He said this to prove that He is the Lord of the simple substances and of the world of compounds, for, simple things owe their origin to (premptory) command and compounds to creative process.

These four attributes of God, the Supreme, namely Rabbil Alamin, ar-Rahman,-ar-Rahim, Malik-e-yaumiddin, mentioned in the Surah Fatiha, though they generally manifest themselves in the cosmos, in fact embody prophecies which receive scant attention from the people and they are that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) exhibited the characteristics of the four attributes in his own person. He grew in a state of utter lack of means. He never had an opportunity to contact a cultured people nor did he have a chance of an elementary general education nor leisure to acquire knowledge of the subtle and abstruse sciences of philosophy. And behold, in spite of total absence of any such opportunity, he was granted a gift in the shape of the Holy Quran before whose high and righteous sciences all other sciences pale into insignificance. One who studies the Holy Quran a little thoughtfully and deliberates over it, he will at once appreciate all the philosophies and sciences of the world are nothing compared to it and all the wise men and philosophers are way behind it. (Al-Hakm April 17, 1900)

The Holy Prophet (blessings of Allah and His peace be on him) was the perfect reflector of the four attributes of Allah the Excellent described in the Sura Fatiha. Tho Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was the projector of the first attributive Rabbil alamin (the Lord of Universal Providence) as Allah the Supreme has certified

KHILAFAT LIBRARY وما ارسلنك الا رحمة اللعالمين

"We sent Thee as mercy to the Universe" (Al-Ambiya R/7.)

Rabbil alamin signified universal providence, similarly the grace and the blessings and the guidance and the message of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was assigned to the whole world and the entire universe. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) became also the reflector of the next attributive Al-Rahman, for, there is possibly no return or recompense of his beneficence and benevolence

"I seek for it no return from you (Al-Furqan R/5)." Again he is the projector of the attribute Rahmaniyyat. The hard times suffered by him and his companions for the cause of Islam and the pains they took in this behalf were not wasted. In fact they were all rewarded and the expression Rahim was applied in the Holy Quran to the Holy Prophet of Allah (may He bless him with peace). He is also the projector of the attributive Malik-e-yaumid din. Its full manifestation occurred on the day of the fall of Mecca. Such a perfect manifestation of the four Divine attributes which in fact are mother attributes never happened in the case of any other prophet. (Al-Hakm Aug. 10 1903).

The manifestation of Al-Hamdu lillah (all praise is due to Allah) took place in the Holy Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) through two expressions, *namely* Muhammad and Ahmad. By recounting the four attributes of the Perfect Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him), He ascribed them to the honoured companions-in other words, Allah the Excellent, planned to diffuse them reflexively. *Fana fillah* losing oneself in Allah implies, therefore, that man should seek immersion in the Divine attributes. Now, look how He showed the practical examplification of these four attributes in the honoured companions.

When the Holy Prophet (blessidgs of Allah and His peace be on him) was born the people of Mecca were imbecile like infants dependent on milk feed. In other words they stood in need of providential care. They lived like barbarians and beasts. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) fed them on milk like a mother to bring them up. Then He reflected His Rahmaniyyat, thereby granting them means totally independent *of any effort on their part* - He granted them a gift like the Noble Quran and an example like the Noble Prophet. Then He showed them a manifestation of Rahimiyyat. Whatever effort and work they put in, He rewarded it and accepted their faithfulness and did not abandon them to misguidance like that of the Christians and instead granted them steadfastness and perseverance.

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Effort carries a blessing in that God steadies one's feet. None of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) did turn on his heels while thousands of the associates of other prophets turned away. Five hundred disciples of Messiah turned apostate on a single day and a highly trusted confidant sold him to the police for 30 dirhams and another cursed him thrice. The truth of the matter is that the power of the fosterer plays its role; the activating quality of the fosterer and the degree of his excellence will be reflected in the effectivenees and durability of his fostering care.

This is another evidence of the perfectness and superiority of the purifying qualities of our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) that the people trained by him had so much resoluteness and such amenability that they showed in the field of battle that they did not even spare their properties and their lives in defending him. And it is clear evidence of the ineptitude of the Messiah that the very group he had trained had him arrested and then slain and were the ones who cursed him. In short, it was the efficaciousness of the Rahimiyyat of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) that his companions were so steadfast and so very resolute.

Next the practical shape the attributive Malik-i-yaumiddin (Lord of the day of requitement), took in the time of the companions was that God assigned a distinction between them and in their enemies, in other words the perceptiveness and the Divine love they were granted in the world was their reward in this life. Now, to cut a long story short, these four attributives flashed through the companions. It is a matter for deep reflection that the group of companions should not be confined to those who have gone by in the early age; there is yet another party mentioned by Allah, the Excellent, in the Holy Quran—they are part of the companions who will be accompaying the buruz (reflexion) of the name Ahmad as He has said وآخرين منهم لما يلحقوا بهم "And others from among them who have not yet joined them".

That is to say, "Do not restrict the group of companions to this party only. In fact the party of the period of the Promised Messiah will also consist of the companions."

The commentators have agreed that this verse refers to the party of the Promised Messiah. The word منهم signifies that their inner attitude and grace-absorbing qualities will be like those of the companions. The training of companions took place openly. But none can see these people-they too will be under the fostering care of the Holy Prophet (blessings of Allah and His peace be on him). It is therefore that all the Divines have called this party the 'companions'. The way the four attributives found expression through the companions, it was necessary that similarly it should happen among the party described as و آخرين منهم لما يلحقوا بهم. (the others from among them who have not yet joined them). (Al-Hakm Jan. 24, 1901).

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These are four attributives that are not mere verbal slogans. In fact Allah has laid bare the world scene—some in the world deny His Khaliqiyyat (creative power), some reject His Rahmaniyyat and some His attributive Malik-i-yaumiddin (Lordship of the day of requital). Such anarchy of beliefs is found in all the religions. Islam alone is the holy faith that has represented an aggregation of all the perfect attributes. This Surah (chapter) which is called the Mother Book, is therefore, recited five times for people to contemplate how blessed is the religion of Islam that gives such teaching. The God of Islam is not the One Who was born out of the belly of any person as was Isa (Jesus) deified ; nor is He One Who is incapable of creating nor one to with-hold grant of salvation for fear that nothing may be left for Him to create any further after that, there being only numbered souls that are self-perpetuating and they are all that He repeatedly brings to the world and were He to grant them salvation, there will be little left for Him to busy Himself with.

If a whole world were to join in finding fault with the attributes of God as believed in Islam, it would not be able to do so. We ask how can He undertake to guard every one when

the people say He has many shortcomings. God should possess perfect qualities. If they are not there then how one can put any hope in Him and what should one ask of Him ? Our Lord has all the perfect attributes. Pray to Him therefore to lead you "to the straight path, the path of those whom Thou hast favoured."

In short, Allah the Excellent by pointing to us His four attributes teaches us how to pray "to show us the way of those who were granted His rewards and favour of honour and not of those with whom He is angry nor of the misguided". This is not a fable. Allah, the Supreme, in fact knew what was to happen. Therefore He said, "You will be punished the way the early people had been punished if you behaved likewise. That is if you did not stay straight in the way of God, you too will incur His wrath." (Badr. Jan. 9, 1908)."

If one ponders these attributes of God, the Supreme, Rabb (Lord), Rahman (Gracious), Rahim (Compassionate) Malik-e-yaumid din (Master of the Day of requital) one wonders how marvellous God is ; with such a Lord one could never be bereft and unblest. The word Rabb carries the sense that His fostering care will be operative in the hereafter too.

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(Al-Badr Nov. 24, 1904).

All the Divine attributes and Divine works mentioned in the Holy Quran are the qualities of the name Allah. It is, for instance, said Alhamdu lillah-e-Rabbil alamin (all praise is due to the Lord of Universal Providence). (Haqiqatul Wahi p. 152).

God, the Supreme, has four attributes showing His glory in full splendour and the face of His eternal everlasting Being in full dimensions. By describing His four attributes in the Surah Fatiha, God, the Excellent has directed men to worship Him as their deity, in the words ایاك نعبد و ایاك نستعین .

"We serve thee alone and seek only Thy help." In other words, "O God, Possessor of these four attributes, we devoutly worship Thee alone, for, Thy Providence extends to all the worlds and so is Thy graciousness and also Thy compassion and equally does Thy power of requital embrace the entire universe

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and none shares Thy attributes of beauty and beneficence and therefore we associate none in Thy worship. Now it should be clearly understood that in this Surah (Chapter) God the Most High has declared these four attributes as the completest manifestors of His Divinity and it is that He has based on this description the conclusion that the Divine Being possessing these four attributes is alone worthy of worship; and in fact these four attributes are perfect in every respect and encompass like a circle all the ingredients and appertunances of Divinity, for, these attributes cover His originative attributes and His medial attributes of Rahmaniyyat and Rahimiyyat and also His latter-day attribute of requitement and as a fact of principle no work of Allah, the Sublime, is outside the range of these four attributes. These four attributes thus show the face of God the Supreme in full excellence. *Istawa alal arsh* (settling on the throne) signifies in point of fact that when these four attributes of God, the Supreme, manifest themselves through the creation of the universe, then God in that way fully settles Himself on the throne with no attribute that is a necessary ingredient of Divinity being left out and all the attributes are resplendent in full glory as when a King sits on his throne, all his glory is displayed at the time of his installation ; a command is given to prepare a variety of things to meet royal requirements and they are prepared forthwith and that is what represents the true nature of universal providence, and next the audience are loaded with grants and generous gifts without any service on their part purely as an act of princely grace. Thirdly those who are engaged in service are aided with necessary means to discharge their assignments properly and fourthly the gates of requital are opened wide, some are cut down and some are set free. These four attributes are constant accessories to enthronement. The Divine enforcement of these four attributes evidently means settlement of God the Supreme on His throne which is named *arsh*.

Now as to the meaning of the observation that four angels are bearing this throne, it should be understood that there are four angels charged as functionaries of these four attributives to

project these attributes of God, the Most High, to the world and under these are four stars named sustainers of species and have been called Devtas in the Vedas. They diffuse the essence and are so to say holding the spiritual throne. The idolators clearly believed as is evident from the Vedas that the Devtas possessed these four attributes independently, It is therefore that they have been so lavishly praised and magnified in the Vedas and prayers to grant wishes have been addressed to them. Here God, the Excellent, has metaphorically imparted the teaching that the four Devtas whom the idol-worshippers regard as their deities are not at all worthy of service but are all four of them servants bearing the throne of God, the Supreme, that is why these Divine attributes are expressed through their mirror and that arsh (throne) signifies the attributes that are the accompaniment of enthronement as explained already.

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We have just stated that Rabb means Devta. The Holy Quran started accordingly with the Surah "All praise is due to Allah the Lord of Universal providence" i. e. all manification and eulogies should be addressed to God Who is the devta of all the worlds. He is the Lord of the Universe, the gracious God of universe and the Lord of the requitement of the universe. There is no god other than Him.

Since during the incipient period of the Holy Quran worship of multiplicity of deities was rife and Greeks had coined a name for gods of every species synonymous in India with the word devta. The word of God therefore first addressed itself to these false gods, as, He said "All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of universal Providence". In other words, He is the Lord of the worlds and not of one or two and He alone should be worshipped and magnified and praised; it is wrong to extol the praises of others or to worship them.

The attributes that the idolators had assigned to the four Devtas (Deities) in this shape, God the Supreme aggregated all these in His person, indicating that His person was the sole source of these attributes.

The idol-worshippers had from antiquity the belief that

God had four basic attributes, the root of all other attributes—creating, next granting necessary means, then helping the workers towards development and at the end awarding reward and punishment. They used to ascribe these four attributes to four Devtas (deities). The people of Noah had four deities on this very basis and in terms of these very attributes the idolators of Arabia had coined Lot, Manat, Uzza and Hubbal. They believed that this foursome were sustaining the world deliberately each according to his special power and that they were their intercessors leading them to God. This meaning is, accordingly, evident from the verse ليقربونا الى الله زلفى (Al-Zumar R 1).

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As we have said before, the Vedas also tend to the magnification and admiration of these four deities. Though the Vedas talk of quite a host of other deities, but the principal deities who gave birth to minor deities who form their off-shoots, are four in number, for, the number of their functions is also pointed as four. The first aim of the Holy Çuran, therefore, was to destroy the deities of Vedas etc. and to expound that these were misconception of people that they had made different objects gods of different species and that these were in fact four exclusive attributes of God, the Supreme, and that these lifeless devtas were bearing these four attributes like servants and serfs.

The criticism of the Arya Samajists in fact ricochets to the Vedas. For, the Muslims praise God Who is the honoured of all. The Arya Samajists, on the other hand, regard as deities their false gods who are bearing the throne (arsh) of the four attributes of God, the Supreme, like servants and serfs and bondsmen. In fact they are servants of serfs, for, there are other powers that are dominant over them which have been called Malaik (angels) who sustain the powers of these devtas (deities) of which one is called in the language of the law, Gabriel another Michael and another Izrael another Israfael. The Sanatanists believe in angels of this type and call them jam.

(Nasim-i-Davat p. 85 footnote).

MOON IN THE EAST

A Short Biography of Hazrat Amirul-Mominin Al-haj Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II, The Late Imam of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam.

By Abdul Ghafoor Soofi

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Amir-ul-mominin Hazrat Haji Fazle Omar Bashir-ud-din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II, was born Saturday night of January 12, 1889, at Qadian, India.

It was a memorable event in the eventful history of Islam. A wave of jubilation swept the hearts of his admirers and disciples in deep gratitude to the Gracious God, for, the birth of a man-child in the household of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Imam and Reformer of the age had been expected in fulfillment of the forceful prophecy announced by the Holy Founder of the Movement in the year 1886.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India, had been called in 1882 to his Divine mission to regenerate Islamic faith and purify Islamic practice.

Islam, as a spiritual force, had lost its hold on the souls of its followers. Faith had crumbled, practice was ignored, doctrine had been dogmatized, instruction had been neglected ; the kernel lay embedded deep beyond the ken of the erudite and only the shell remained. Muslims differed over small details and ignored the common cardinals. They wrangled, argued, swapped anethmas and made religion a laughing-stock and a ready target of the hostile forces. They were cut up into as many as 72 warring camps. The glory of Islam had become a past story ; its power had dwindled. State after state and kingdom after kingdom and

nation after nation had faded into the backyard of history.

The great Mughal had laid down his sceptre, the warrior Pathan had been hemmed in in his hilly homeland, Persia lay bleeding under the heels of foreigners, the Ottoman Empire had become a broken reed waiting for a storm to blow it into pieces. The storm brewed and blowed and Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Tripoli and Egypt became deadweights rocking the boat into the boisterous seas.

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The star of the cross was shining bright on the horizon. The western powers ruled Asia and Africa and the Christian Church was having a field day. It hoped and planned to annex the entire world of Islam to its growing empire. It had purse; it had power; it had prestige, it had a slick tongue and a slicker pen. Islam, the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet, the Muslim rulers of the past, history of Islam, all came under the Church's concerted vicious attacks from all directions.

Islam had no central leadership. It lacked organization; it lacked funds; it lacked guts. A heavy cloud of deadly gloom enveloped the trembling hearts of the Muslim masses.

They felt the end had come. Then came the Messiah, the Mahdi. It was a bugle that blew from the core of heavens thundering across the horizon as it reached down to the earth. There was suddenly a galvanizing force released that sent some hearts thrilling, others were petrified and still others were infuriated.

A storm arose. The elite hailed him and they were few. The haughty denounced him and they were many. The bigots joined in the chorus. At that hour, the hour of pain and anguish, the Promised Messiah undertook a journey to Ludhiana and Hoshiarpur where he retired to a lonely cottage far beyond the din of the town. During his forty-day retreat there he prayed for the victory of faith and for a miracle, a miracle of grace, as a sign manuel of the Divine origin of Islam.

Key to Victory

His prayer was heard. On February 20, 1886, the Promised

Messiah announced the Divine communication in a poster that was widely published, in the following words received from the Lord of Heavens and earth, the Lord of immeasurable grace :-

> "The Compassionate, the Noble, the Mighty, the Exalted Lord-God Who has power over everything, Whose station is high and Whose name is honoured, addressing me by means of His speech, said :
>
> I grant thee a sign of Mercy, like the one thou hast begged of Me.

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Now then, I have heard thy supplications, and conferred on thy petitions, through My compassion, a place in the seat of acceptance and have made thy journey (to Hoshiarpur and Ludhiana) blissful for thee. Now then, thou art given the sign of Grace and Beneficence and handed the key to victory and triumph. O victorious, peace be on thee : God said this so that those who seek life be freed from the paws of death and those who lie buried in graves may find their way out and so that the honour of Islamic faith and the glory of the Word of Allah may become manifest to people and so that truth may come with all its blessings and falsehood may flee with all its curses and so that men should understand that I am the Almighty with power to do what I will ; and so that they may believe that I am with thee and so that those who do not believe in the person of God and disbelieve and reject the religion of God and the Book of God and the Holy Prophet of God, Muhammad, the Chosen, may confront a clear sign and so that the path of the wrong-doers may become obvious. Now then, have the good tidings that thou shalt be given a dignified child, a pure boy. Thou shalt receive a holy son. That son, that child will be of thy seed, of thy progeny and of thy generation.

A handsome pure boy is coming. He is thy guest. His name is Emmanuel and also Bashir. He has been gifted with the Holy Spirit and he is free from impurity. He is the light

of Allah. Blessed is the one coming from Heaven. With him is Fazl (grace) that will come as he comes. He will enjoy glory, grandeaur and wealth. He will come to the world to purify many of the ills through his Messianic breath and spirit of righteousness.

He is the Word of Allah, for, the mercy and jealousy of God has sent him by the article of His glory. He will be exceedingly intelligent and of keen perception and tender of heart and will make four of three (its meaning is not clear).

It is a Monday; the auspicious Monday-heartwarming son honoured, lucky, manifestor of the Prime and of the Final, manifestor of the Truth and the Victory, as if Allah had come down from the heavens Himself, whose descent will be full of blessings and means of the manifestation of the supreme Majesty of God.

Light is on its way, light that God annointed with the perfume of His own pleasure.

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"We will infuse in him Our own spirit and the Divine shadow shall be his umbrella. He will grow fast and will be the means of the emancipation of slaves and shall be known to the ends of the earth and nations will receive blessings through him.

Then he will be lifted towards the heavens, to the high pinnacle of his soul and this is a matter that has been already decreed."

9-Year Deadline

On March 22, 1886, Hazrat, in another poster, declared that the Promised son will be born within a period of nine years.

In a green-paper poster issued at a later date (December 1, 1888), Hazrat stated that the Promised Reformer had been called Fazl (grace) in the language of the revelatfon and that he had also been named Mahmud and Bashir, the second and Fazle Omar.

The same year on March 23 the Imam initiated votaries to his spiritual movement through a pact of repentence and commitment to devotional service of Islam. He had, he said, been commanded as the Reformer of the age to announce that seekers after truth should subscribe allegiance to him in order "to acquire true faith and true inner piety and to learn the way of Divine love and to abandon the dirty life of indolence and treachery."

Promised Messiah

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In the end of the year 1890 the Imam, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, announced that he had been honoured with the office of Messiah Promised both to the Muslims and Christians and that Jesus son of Mary was dead and was barred like all mortals from paying a second visit to the world and that as a Prophet of Israel he was not qualified to regenerate the faith of the Holy prophet Muhammad to which he had never been initiated.

The child was brought up with utmost care and tender affection in an atmosphere surcharged with piety of the highest order and deeply-felt gratitude. But, owing to the blind zeal of a sickly nanny, he contracted a deadly affection in his lungs in his infancy, and his health remained a matter of the deepest concern for quite a few years. The Imam devoted his attention to the care of the child in a manner worthy of his high rank and in consonance with the cultural pattern of Islamic atmosphere he was comissioned to revive in the desolate garden of Faith. He would tell him stories having a direct bearing on character-formation under Divine auspices, setting before him the pleasure of God as the sole objective of life.

The young boy was exceedingly fond of the indulgent father and often during the day would knock and say "father, open the door" and the benign father would immediately rise and comply with the premptory request.

Mahmud would sometime walk over and stand by his father without a word. The father would at once sense that the boy wanted something but felt shy of spelling out his request. He would then turn to his wife, the good lady Nusrat Jehan Begum,

to find out what the child wanted. The indulgent father had made it a rule to keep some sweets at hand so that anytime the boy wanted a piece of candy, he was given forthwith. Mahmud used to join his father at the table at mealtime and was generally attired in simple but clean dress.

Once he gathered up a whole lot of almonds served to some guests. The Promised Messiah quietly observed. "This is a good boy. He wo'nt keep more than a couple for himself." Immediately Mahmud placed back all the almonds in the plate and picked up only two for himself.

When the boy grew, he used to play with other children without asserting himself in any manner, but disported himself as one of them and displayed keen interest in rowing, riding, shooting, badminton and football in due course of time acquiring proficiency in almost all the hobbies.

Motherly Influence

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In his breeding, his mother, Lady Hazrat Nusrat Jehan Begum, had a decisive role characterized by a happy balance of maternal love with fear of God; in fact the balance was generously tipped in favour of a burning ardour for Divine pleasure and grace. The lady herself was a noble off-spring of the celebrated saint Khwaja Mir Dard, a scion of the Sayyads of Delhi, revered for their piety, learning and uprightness. The Promised Messiah had been directed through Divine revelation to seek her hand in marriage.

Writing on the subject, the Promised Messiah observes: "The Holy Prophet had said that the Promised Messiah would marry and have children. It carries the hint that Allah will grant him a virtuous son who will be of His elect. Allah does not grant Prophets advance information about their offspring unless He means to grant them righteous children."

Commenting on another occasion, on the prophecy relating to his marriage, the Promised Messiah says, "Marriage here has a special significance as a sign of God and so is the progency

here a special one."

In another note on the subject, the Promised Messiah says that Allah had, through a revelation, disclosed to him that He would arrange his marriage in a noble family and that the bride will be a blessed one.

"Be grateful for My favour. Thou has been granted Khadija." "The above happy intelligence relates to them arriage I contracted in a family of Sayyads of Delhi. By the grace of God, four sons have been its fruits. And my espouse was named Khadija, for, she is the mother of a blessed generation."

"Since God, the Excellent, had promised that He will lay the foundation of Islamic activity through my offspring and raise from it a person gifted with Heavenly spirit, He, therefore was pleased to bring about my marriage with a lady of this family and was further pleased that she should bear children who would work to diffuse in the world, to their utmost capacities, the lights of which the seeds have been sown by my hand."

The good Lady Nusrat Jehan Begum of blessed memory had some simple and sound rules that governed the upbringing of her children of whom the most favorite was the eldest child, Hazrat Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad:

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(i) Trusting the child fully so that he should be grounded firmly in the belief that he should not do anything to shake his parents' faith in him. That attitude, the good lady believed, helped put the child's behaviour on an even keel.

(ii) She infused in the mind of the child, from the earliest stage, great aversion to untruth, and inculcated in him a spirit of independence and sense of self-respect.

(iii) The child was trained to accept discipline and to obey. An obedient child, she figured, could be straightened any time he went wrong.

(iv) She firmly believed that if the eldest child was well-bred, others would naturally follow his example.

The hero of our story thus enjoyed the best of attention and measured up to the most rigid standards of discipline, obedience, truthfulness and excellence of behaviour and sweetness of disposition.

Early Education

Education of young Mahmud started with a simple reading of the Holy Quran, early in 1895. Hafiz Abdullah Nagori was appointed his teacher. On June 7, 1897, he finished his lessons and knew how to read the Holy Book with great fluency- The Promised Messiah was besides himself with joy. He had set the child on the straight course and the boy had done exceedingly well, he believed. The event was celebrated with a thanksgiving feast, attended with prayers, and shared by many companions of the Promised Messiah, For this occasion, the Promised Messiah composed a poem, embodying a moving prayer to God in acknowledgement of His favours and His grace.

"Thou hast vouchsafed unto me this day;
Mahmud completed his study course.
For this graciousness, my heart is brimming over
with Thy praises.
O Lord of this slave,
How can I do justice to the
duty of thanks-giving
Thou hast granted me these three
Thy slaves:
My most loved Creator,
Hear my petitions, all of them;
May I be an offering for Thy Face,
Keep them by thy Mercy!
I commit these three to Thy care,
Make them moons of the Faith,
Mahmud, Thy servant is a part of my heart,
grant him long life and wealth,
Dispel all darkness.

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Make his days full of felicity,
and his mornings full of light."

In the beginning, Mahmud was enrolled in the District Lower Primary School and later joined the Talimul-Islam School started by the Promised Messiah in 1898. Owing to constant ill-health and weak eye-sight, he was a very indifferent student and did not seem to be greatly interested in his studies. His eye-sight was considerably impaired as a result of trachoma he had developed in early childhood. Because of excruciating pain, he could not sleep for days and the malady was so malignant that his physicians expressed the fear that he might lose his sight altogether, The Promised Messiah had only one course left, his usual remedy, the only remedy he really and truly believed in—prayer combined with fasting. He had hardly fasted for three days when Mahmud suddenly opened his eyes and with immense joy announced his total relief from pain.

Indulgent Teachers

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His teachers were very indulgent and took special care to give him the best of their attention. Once Master Faqirullah complained to the Promised Messiah about the half-hearted way of Mahmud as a pupil. Mahmud was frightened and in panic kept himself out of the sight of his father. The Promised Messiah expressed his appreciation of the teacher's concern for the boy and felt very happy that his son was not totally neglecting his studies. He was personally of the view that Mahmud's state of health was too poor to permit him the hardship of schooling. When Mahmud heard his father speak so lightly of his desultory school attendence, he took the liberty of playing truant oftener than before. On another occasion Mir Nasir Nawab, the grand-father of Muhmud, complained to the Promised Messiah that the boy was very backward in his studies and that the Promised Messiah was not showing much concern about the matter. The Promised Messiah sent for Hakimalummat, Maulvi Nuruddin who was, as a rule, always called in whenever a difficult situation arose. Addressing him, the Promised Messiah said that the Mir Sahib

was very much dissatisfied with the educational progress of Mahmud and had complained that his hand-writing was so bad that it was altogether illegible. He expressed a desire to put the boy to a test. Then he wrote out a few lines for Mahmud to copy out. The boy made a careful copy which the Promised Messiah found good enough and expressed the view that his handwriting was almost like his own (The Promised Messiah's).

Hakimalummat Maulvi Nuruddin, who had deep affection for the lad, was only too glad to express his agreement with the Promised Messiah's opinion.

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On his own statement, the Khalifatul Masih II had received little or no secular education. "In conventional terms" so far his education was concerned, he observed on one occasion, "I have a failure score in primary. But since the school was a sort of domestic concern, I was promoted to higher classes. Then I failed in my Middle class enamination but since the school was, in a way, our own, I was again promoted to higher classes. At last when the Matriculation examination took place, the cat was out of the bag and the measure of my studies came to full light. I passed only in Arabic and Urdu."

Some of the school teachers of the Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad were close companions of the Promised Messiah and were great scholars and men of towering piety and solid substance in many fields of learning and infulness of time became leading lights of the Movement. They were Sayyad Qazi Amir Husain, Maulvi Muhammad Sarwar Shah, Sheikh Yaqoob Ali Irfani, Mufti Muhommad Sadiq and Maulvi Sher Ali.

The claims of the Promised Messiah had aroused a nest of hornests all around him and his followers. Bitter calumny, foul language, sordid personal attacks and threats of violence had become the daily ration his fellow-Muslims and Christian adversaries and Hindu critics served him on a copious scale. Under these circumstances, the Promised Messiah took the precaution of forbidding his sons to accept offers of food, candies or even a simple drink of plain water from anyone. They were also not

permitted to stay out after sundown.

Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad observed these commands with scrupulous loyalty. He would never go out after evening and would never accept food or drink from anyone. Even while as a private pupil of Maulvi Sher Ali, whenever he felt thirsty, he would go home, take a drink and return to his tutor's house to resume his lessons.

That he was not very enthusiastic about his schooling is clear from the record of his attendance and progress but he was not wasting away his days in idle play or leisure. On the contrary, Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad was deeply involved in the spiritual revolution that the claims of his father had triggered in the whole Indian sub-continent, the Middle East and the Christian centres. The Promised Messiah had become the central figure in the arena of militant controversy and the sole target of the offensive campaign of villification and scurrility mounted against Islam by his angry rivals. The Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad heard his father daily, even hourly, announcing fresh prophecies, and new heavenly revelations foreshadowing his victory and the triumph of hosts of God and his young mind was naturally deeply impressed.

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Spiritual Immersion Process

In the year 1898, while yet he was a lad of ten, Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad, formally tendered his oath of allegiance to the Promised Messiah and was iniated into the Movement at his blessed hands.

Activities in Childhood

At the early age of eight, Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad was instrumental in the formation of the local youngmen's association "Hamdardan-i-Islam" (partisans of Islam), under the auspices of Hakimalummat, Maulvi Nuruddin who used to take a guiding part in it. Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad was its most active and enthusiastic member, an eloquent speaker, debator and its very life. In 1900 the association was named Tash-Hizul-Azhan by

the Promised Messiah with the object of preparing dedicated youngmen for the service of Islam. Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad took a leading role in all its programs and organized it into a useful and active auxiliary of the movement directed to the cultivation of good manners, good morals, habits of study, thoughtful use of the opportunities that the momentous times offered and a burning concern for the glory of Islam and a keen sense of responsibility and piety of heart, soul and mind. It was in the midst of this campaign that Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad made a pledge to God that he would uphold and observe the prescribed prayer till his last breath. And it was at this time that he had his first personal experience of a full and soothing and soul-lifting realization of the existence of a Living, Sublime, Everlasting God, Lord of Grace and Mercy, Wisdom and Honour.

The Wall Case

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Nizamuddin and Imam-ud-Din, two nasty cousins of the Promised Messiah, drew up a wall blocking passage to the mosque (Masjid Mubarak) with the result that the Prcmised Messiah had to file a court case which stood little chance of a favourable decision as all records supported the rival party. There was great concern in the community. Sahibzada Mahmud "saw in a dream that the wall was being demolished; people were pulling it apart brick by brick. In this state he saw Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Din appear on the scene."

When the case was unexpectedly decided in favour of the Promised Messiah and the wall was being torn down and as Mahmud stood by watching the demolition work, Hazrat Maulana Nuruddin walked over to the site and since the dream had been told him he at once pointed out "Mian, your dream has come true."

Prophecy About Mahmud

On November 30, 1901, the Promised Messiah composed a poem offering his tribute of praise to God for granting him

children, three sons and a daughter—Sahibzada Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, Sahibzada Mirza Bashir Ahmad, Sahibzada Mirza Sharif Ahmad, and Sahibzadi Mubaraka Begum.

How I remember Thy graces O Lord !
Thou granted me foreknowledge and then (in fulfilment) this offspring,
Thou said "They will never perish (but) grow in prosperity like elms in gardens."
Thou gavest me this news time and again,
Holy is then the One who grabbed my enemies,
Thou gavest me the tidings "Thou hast a son who will one day be My loved elect. I shall dispel darkness through that moon,
I will show how he changes a whole world."

Under Divine Care

In January 1902 Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad went to Batala to appear in his Secondary School examination. The Promised Messiah received instruction through Divine word to send along with the boy a companion, as he was in a poor state of health.

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Marriage in Early Age

In October 1902, Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad married Mahmuda Begum, daughter of Hazrat Dr. Khalifa Rashiduddin. The bride was brought home in the middle of October 1903. On this occasion Seth Adam Ismail of Bombay sent a cap as present, bearing, in bold inter-woven silken letters, the words of Divine revelation relating to the birth of the Promised Son. "heart-warming, honoured, favorite of luck, Manifestor of the Prime and of the Final and of the Truth and the Victory as if Allah had Himself descended from the Heaven." The Promised Messiah thanked him for his gift in a letter written in his own hand.

As a Budding Poet.

Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad came up in 1903 as a bright, youthful and spirited poet. His first composition was addressed

to God : "I seek Thy pleasure all the time. If I am favoured with it, I shall feel that I got all that there is to get."

As his interest grew in composing poems, he turned to Khwaja Altaf Hussain Hali, the celebrated national poet of the day, with a request to glance through his productions and make corrective suggestions. Maulana Hali, in his answer, advised Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad against wasting his precious years in the idle occupation and said, "Your present age is the time to learn. Put your heart in it. When you grow up and acquire proficiency in knowledge and will have leisure, you may then dabble in poetry."

Next, Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad turned to Hazrat Jalal of Lucknow for directions. But he always remembered gratefully the wise and sound advice of Maulana Hali and greatly appreciated his sincerity.

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Travelling Together With the Promised Messiah.

The Promised Messiah took Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad with him in his journeys to Ludhiana, Delhi, Sialkot, Amirtsar, Ferozepur, Multan, Gurdaspur and Lahore.

The Promised Messiah's Idea of Education

In 1905 Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad went to Amritsar to appear in his High School graduation examination. As he returned home, somebody pointed out to the Promised Mesiah that the boy looked very much broken in health, attributing this state to his worrying about the result of the test. The Promised Messiah said, "I feel disgusted over paying any heed to matters of this nature and do'nt even pray for such things. I am neither interested in jobs nor look at examinations with that end in view. I would however like that he should have information about current sciences to the extent that such knowledge comes in useful to him in the service of Faith. Passing tests or failing in examinations is not a matter of concern nor any objective."

Hazrat Maulana Nuruddin as Teacher

At this stage Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad's education was

taken over by Al-Haj Hakim Maulana Nuruddin. The Khalifatul Masih II says in this connection, "In the matter of my education, I am under the heaviest obligation to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I (may Allah be pleased with him !). Since he was also a physician and knew that my health did not permit poring over books for a long time, he made it a rule to make me sit beside himself and say "Mian, I will read and you will listen." In this manner he persuaded me into learning the Quran and then he taught me Bukhari. He taught me the Holy Quran in three months. After the death of the Promised Messiah, he asked me to have instructions in Bukhari from him. In fact I had told him that the Promised Messiah (peace of Allah be on him) had ordered me to learn the Holy Quran and Bukhari from him. I had instruction from him in medicine also under the command of the Promised Messiah (peace of Allah be on him)."

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"My honoured teacher Hazrat Maulvi Nuruddin (may Allah the Excellent exalt him) taught me the Quran. Allah, the Excellent, has granted me vast knowledge now. In fact Hazrat Maulvi Sahib used to observe that he learnt from me such subtleties of the Quran as he had not known before nor found in any book. But he gave me the taste of this Book and put me on the right track in respect of its commentary and laid the foundation on which I could raise a building. Therefore my heart is ever engaged in prayers for him."

A Divine Communication

When Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad was at the age of fifteen, he received the Divine intelligence one night identical with the one the Promised Messiah had been vouchesafed that very night. The revelation said : "Verily Allah will make those who follow thee superior to those who reject thee".

In the morning when Mufti Muhammad Sadiq asked for a copy of overnight revelations to the Promised Messiah for publication in his newspaper, Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad who had been assigned this duty, went to the Promised Messiah to convey

the Mufti Sahib's request. The Promised Messiah handed him a paper, on reading which Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad was puzzled to find the said revelation missing. He took the courage to point out to the Promised Messiah the omission. The Promised Messiah at once made the entry saying that it had been left out in the copy due to oversight, though it had been noted in his personal diary.

Sudden Recovery From Illness

When Kangra was shaken by an earthquake, according to a prophecy made by the Promised Messiah earlier, the Promised Messiah shifted from his house to the garden. During this period, the Sahibzada and his maternal uncle Sayyad Mir Muhammad Ishaque fell ill. The Promised Mesiah was worried and received the revelation "Security, a promise from the Lord, the Compassionate." Immediately afterwards both got well.

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Maulvi Abdul Karim's Death

Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Karim of Sialkot, a brillant scholar and a close associate of the Promised Messiah, fell sick in 1905. Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad was not very much attached to him as he did not have more than a casual contact with him and was instead devoted loyally to Hazrat Maulvi Nuruddin. But he was deeply impressed with the overflowing love that Hazrat Maulvi Abdul-Karim entertained for the Promised Messiah. Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad also had great admiration for his stirring sermons. Maulvi Abdul Karim could not pull through his illness and passed away. Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad felt so deeply grieved that for a whole day he went without food and lay most of the time inert like a man in a trance, weeping copiously. The sad event upset him so much that he felt the loss as a personal blow. He was a new man that day and resolved to take keener and deeper interest in religious activity. In his own words "the life of my honoured teacher Hazrat Maulvi Nuruddin (Allah be pleased with him) and the death of Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Karim were the two great incentives that changed the

pattern of my whole life."

Prophecy in the "Will"

In his will, the Promised Messiah made a momentous prophecy in respect of Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad. He says, "God has informed me that He will raise from among my children a man for the service of the Movement and especially favour him with nearness to Himself and with His Word and that righteousness shall prosper through him and that many will accept the truth. Wait for those days, therefore. And beware that every body is known in his own time and it is quite possible that before his time, he may appear to be an average person or seem to merit criticism because of some misleading ideas, even as a man before becoming perfect is but a drop of sperm or a clot".

Talim-ul-Islam School Controversy

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It was in 1905 that Talimul Islam School became a point of great controversy ; its very existence was threatened. Its Executive Board was unanimously of the view that it should be folded and instead training and education of youngmen in modern sciences, in medicine and engineering, be subsidized by the Movement. The Promised Messiah had started the institution with the sole object of preparing young men zealous for the ascendency of Islam and jealous for the restoration of its honour, youngmen committed to put Faith before everything, before temporal considerations and worldly pursuits. Hazrat Maulvi Nuruddin and Sahizada Mahmud Ahmad who was only sixteen years old at the time were the only two persons who stood for the continuation of the School and vigorously presented its case before the Promised Messiah who decided to keep the institution running with an additional class for theological instruction.

Sadr Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya

Sadr Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya, a body to run the organization of "Will" properties and all related matters including the "Garden cemetry" established by the Promised Messiah under Divine commands for burial of such members after their death as had measured up to the standard of conduct set by Islam

and had made their contributions in the pursuance of the articles embodied in the "Will", was instituted by the Promised Messiah in 1905 and Sahibzada Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad was nominated by him as a member of the body of trustees.

During this period when the rules and regulations governing membership of the Board of Trustees of the Anjuman were being studied, one day the Promised Messiah, addressing his wife, the good Lady Nusrat Jehan Begum, observed, "Some time I feel inclined to tell the people about the Khilafat of Mahmud. On second thoughts, I have the view that Allah, the Excellent, will make known His will in His own time."

Maulvi Muhammad Ali's Observations

On the occasion of the marriage ceremony of his maternal uncle, Mir Muhammad Ishaq, Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad read a poem he had composed as his congratulatory message. Maulvi Muhammad Ali admired the piece so much that in a note in the Review (Urdu Edition) of March 1906, he remarked "Such fervour and such enthusiasm (for faith) as is throbbing in the heart of a young boy of eighteen is no ordinary thing. For, his age is the age of playfulness and sport. It is an eye-opener for those dark-hearted people who call the Hazrat Sahib an imposter. They should ponder the question that if his claims were fraudulent, then how come this young lad's heart is full of such true zeal."

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As Editor of Tashhiz

A journal titled "Tash-Hizul-Azhan" was started in March 1906. Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad was its first editor. Its primary issue carried a 14-page introduction written by him. Hazrat Maulana Nuruddin expressed his pleasant surprise on reading it and commended it highly to Khwaja Kamaluddin and Maulvi Muhammad Ali for perusal. In the Review (Urdu Edition) of March 1906, Maulvi Muhammad Ali, in his editorial comments on some of the remarkable observations of the writer, said, "Deliberate well, can one whose training and teaching is capable of producing such fruit, be a liar? If he is a fake, then what are the signs of the righteous in this world?"

Birth and Death of a Boy

On May 26, 1906 the wife of Sahibzada Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, gave birth to a boy. He was named Naseer Ahmad. The boy died while he was yet in his infancy.

Full Schedule of Activities

Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad gave his first lecture on "Unity of God" at the 1906 annual gathering held at Qadian. It was very well received and highly appreciated by the audience. During this period his activities were centered in Islamic themes. He addressed meetings, contributed articles on topical subjects like the signs that appeared in support of the Divinely-inspired mission of the Promised Messiah, on "Love of God", on "Martyrs of Kabul" on the "Dismal death of Alexander Dowie of Zion city of America".

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Split in Movement Foretold

The Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad was so much immersed in the activities of the Movement and in prayerful submission to His Maker, that he got very close to Him so much so that he was foretold of big events, like the future split in the ranks of the Community. On March 8, 1907 he was shown, in a vision, a copy of the Divine Revelations to the Promised Messiah. Of these one concerned a mosque where he saw some people raising a row against its Trustee. Addressing one of them, the Sahibzada observed, "If I join your ranks, the Prince will be wroth with me",

Next morning he related the vision to the Promised Messiah who became alarmed and noted it down, interpretting it as presaging division in the Community.

Taught by Angels

He was hardly fifteen when in a dream an angel appeared to him and taught him the inner meaning of the Fatiha, the Opening Chapter of the Holy Quran. He says in this connection, "When I opened my eyes I rememberod some of the points the angel had taught me but I did not take down any notes. Next day I related this experience to my revered teacher Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Din and said to him that I remembered some of the things but I did not take them down and have now forgotten

them. The Maulana told me, in a very affectionate tone, "You appropriated all the knowledge to yourself. If you had remembered some part of it, you could have shared it with me." This dream was in fact pointing to the reality that Allah had posited in my mind the treasure of Quranic teachings in the shape of a seed. From that day until now I have never once deliberated deep the meaning of the Fatiha that I have ever missed coming up with a fresh Divine grant of new verities and new sciences embedded in it.

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Visit to a Sikh Shrine

A delegation headed by the Promised Messiah visited Guru Sahai, a Sikh religious centre in Ferozepur district to view the religious mementoes of Baba Nanak the great Sikh leader. Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad participated in the mission.

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Sheds new Light on Fatiha

In a football match between Khalsa Collegiate High School Amritsar and Talimul Islam High School, Qadian, held at Amritsar for District Championship contest, the Qadian winning team was loudly cheered by Ahmadi as well as non-Ahmadi Muslims. A brief repast was arranged in their honour by the Amritsar Ahmadies. Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad was requested to make a speech on the occasion. After considerable hesitation he agreed and gave a short talk that was highly commended for its originality. In the course of this address he observed, "In the Fatiha God has taught us to pray to Him that we should neither become deserving of His anger nor become lost. According to the Hadith, the former are said to be Jews and the latter are Christians. The Fatiha was revealed to the Holy Prophet in Mecca. It is strange indeed that when this Chapter was imparted to him neither Jews were in opposition to him nor Christians. His only opponents were the idolators of Mecca. What is the secret underlying it and what is the reason behind this omission by Allah of the Meccan idolators whose opposition was in full cry and His mention of Jews and Christians who formed a most negligible part of the local citizenry? The secret behind it was the knowledge of the All-Knowing of the Unseen, the God Who

revealed the Quran, that under His decree the religion of Mecca had been slated for a total fade-out with not a trace of it to be ever found in the future. Therefore there was no need for teaching protective prayer against a religion that was to die away. And the prayer was taught only against religions which had to survive and with which Islam had to have temporal or spiritual confrontation."

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Promised Messiah's last Jaurndy

Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad accompanied the Promised Messiah on his last journey to Lahore on April 27, 1908 and put up in the Ahmadiyya buildings with him and returned home with the last remains of his holy father after his expiry on May 26, 1908.

During his stay at Lahore, he was always at hand serving the Promised Messiah and keeping him company in evening walks. When the Promised Messiah fell sick and was in a sad plight he advised, Dr. Yaqub Beg, one of his attendant physicians, "to take greater care of Mahmud who is not in good health and be more attentive to his treatment." Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad had a premonition of the coming event of his father's death a day before the heart-rending tragedy occurred. He says" I felt myself slumped in depression. I did not ride the horse as usual. I sat with Malik Mubarak Ali in his coach. He had asked me to get in with him. As I took my seat my heart sank to my boots and there was on my lips the line,

"We are pleased in whatever lies Thy pleasure." Malik Sahib chatted with me. I would answer him in monosyllables and then dive deep into my depression. During the night the Promised Messiah's condition grew worse and in the morning he passed away. This was a special determination of God that had prepared me beforehand for bearing the unbearable."

The death of the Promised Massiah affected him profoundly, deeply and grievously. In his own words "The memory of 1908 is very painful to me. It set in motion a new cycle in my life, nay in the lives of all the Ahmadies. This year the man

who was like a soul for our lifeless bodies and was the light of our sightless eyes departed from us. This departure was unto us the end of the world. The earth slipped from beneath our feet and the heaven jolted out of its joints. Parents of children die as a rule in this world. The Promised Messiah likewise passed away. In our case the hardest thing was that we never believed that he too would die.

People foresee the eventuality and therefore some amass wealth, some purchase insurance policies and some make other kinds of provision. But we never imagined that the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) would pass away. Each one of us believed he would die before the death of the Promised Messiah and each one cherished the desire that the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) would perform his obsequies, Youngmen submitted requests to him to pray for their death in his life-time so that he may offer funeral prayers for them."

His Resolve.

On the death of his father, Sahibzada Mirza Mahmud Ahmad made a promise to God. He honoured this promise in every moment of his life, exerting every fibre of his soul, mind and body, till his last moment. Let us hear him in his own inimitable words.

"When the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) passed away it flashed across my mind that now people would subject him to different kinds of criticism and opposition to him will surge in volume. The first thing that I did at the moment was that I made this resolve by his death-bed.

"Even if every body deserted you, and I were left alone I will alone battle against the whole world and take no account of any hostility and animosity."

His role during the First Khilafat

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After the death of the Promised Messiah and before his burial the Ahmadiyya Community, elected with one accord, Hazrat Haji Hafiz Hakim Maulvi Nuruddin, the foremost votary and closest companion of the Promised Messiah, as his first successor, pledging allegiance to him in the spirit and terms of their oath

of loyalty to the late Imam, the Promised Messiah. Sahibzada Haji Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad was the first to take the pledge which he honoured with unquestioning obedience and old-fashioned kind of spontaneous loyalty of the highest order, characterized with sincerest devotion and kept the solemn commitment with open courage to the last breath of the Khalifatul Masih I.

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His Activities during the first Khalifat

During this period his activities became manifold and his engagements took on an important and highly responsible turn. He undertook journeys to different parts of the country visiting Ahmadiyya centers and delivering talks and lectures. He mounted a heavy battery of counter-attacks against enemy criticism of the Ahmadiyya Movement, its late Founder, of Islam and the teachings of the faith and lashed back hard at contending faiths and their exponents. His first tour took him to Begowal, a small town in Kaputhala principality, where he delivered a lecture. He next visited Phagwara, Hajipura, Banga, Kathgarh, Langroa and Rahon. He also visited Batala, Qasur, Delhi, Ferozepur, Lahore, Kapurthala and big centres of Islamic academies, in India and went for health reasons to Simla and Dalhousie. In the latter hill station he had a long argument with Dr. Youngman, a Christian missionary. This talk was later published in pamphlet form under the title "Sermon on the mount".

In all the places he visited, he delivered learned discourses and iiluminating and informative lectures on different aspects of Islamic subjects, on comparative religion and the superiority of the teachings of the Holy Quran. In Delhi the subject of his address was "Christianity and Islam" which he gave at a public meeting presided over by the famous religions writer and mystic Khwaja Hasan Nizami.

In 1908, through his efforts a public library was started in Qadian. At a conference held during the annual meetiug sessions, at Qadian, when the proposal to close the Ahmadiyya

Madrasah (academy) again came up for discussion, he successfully appealed to the participants to carry on the institution started by the Promised Messiah to promote interest in Islamic studies and turn out trained devotees to diffuse its lights and dispel doubts raised by hostile critics of the faith.

First Visit to Kashmir

After the death of the Promised Messiah, Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad was handed over the management of the community Guest house which he did conscientiously with exceeding despatch and courtesy. In 1909, he paid his first visit to Kashmir the valley of roses and returned from there with a gashing wound in his heart. In this Muslim majority State ruled by a Hindu Prince, he saw the shocking tragedy the humiliation of Muslims in their homeland presented; he saw a Hindu huckster tongue-lashing a crowd of over 200 shivering Muslims. When he was yet on the way he needed a porter to handle his luggage and requested a Revenue Officer to get one for him. A man was put at his disposal. After carrying the load for a while the man said he could not go on any more. The Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad mildly rebuked him saying that Kashmiries could easily handle heavy loads and his was rather light. The man said with a deep sigh that he was not a porter by profession and was a respectable landlord but had been forced to do the job by the Officer while on his way to his wedding. The Sahibzada was deeply touched and let him depart.

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Prayer for his Teacher

The same year he started taking lessons in English composition from Hazrat Maulvi Sher Ali. Thc desultory studies continued till 1911. He began these lessons with a prayer he wrote on the first page of his note-book.

"O Lord-God help me in learning this language and bless every word that I learn from my teacher and have mercy on me and on my teacher and help us in breaking the power of the cross and in slaying the swine, for no man has aught of

power without Thy aid."

His contributions to 'Tash-heez-ul-Azhan' continued in increased volume and so did his public speeches.

In 1910 Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad started giving lessons on the Holy Quran in Qadian after evening prayers. He also gave a talk on the occasion of the Annual Gathering, presided over a meeting of the Ahmadiyya Conference and started a discipline class for Ahmadi students. He was appointed Amir (Head) of the Qadian Community by Khalifatul Masih I when the latter had to go to Multan at the end of July, 1910.

First Juma Sermon

On 29 July, he gave his first Friday Sermon. The Khalifatul Masih offered his Juma prayers on 26 August 1910 with the Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad as the prayer-leader.

The Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad also held charge of the MADRASAH AHMADIYYA (Ahmadiyya Academy) from September 1910 till March 1914.

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As Prayer-Leader

The Khalifatul Masih fell off a horse on 18th November 1910 and was laid up for quite some time. He appointed Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad as the prayer-leader.

Offer of Khilafat Rejected.

When the condition off the Khalifatul Masih I grew critical at a certain stage, during his illness, prominent members of the Anjuman (Maulvi Muhammad Ali and Khwaja Kamaluddin) offered to accept the Sahibzada Mahmud Ahmad as the Khalifa. He not only declined the offer but thought it an act of sin even to consider any one or any proposal in this behalf during the incumbency of a Khalifa, even though it related to arrangements after his death.

(To be continued)

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